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Letter dated 4 October 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 28 September 2012 from Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), requesting a mandate from the Security Council for the deployment of an ECOWAS stabilization force to Mali under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

Letter dated 28 September 2012 from the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish first of all to congratulate and commend you on your initiative to organize the high-level meeting on the Sahel, which was successfully held on 26 September 2012, and on your decision to appoint a special representative for the Sahel.

The unanimous view that emerged from the meeting about the need for urgent and immediate action by the international community to end the rebellion, as well as the terrorist and criminal activities in the north of Mali, also obliges me to once more address you on the matter of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) request, endorsed by the African Union, for a Security Council resolution authorizing the deployment of an ECOWAS stabilization force in Mali under a Chapter VII mandate.

You may want to know that pursuant to Security Council resolution 2056 (2012), ECOWAS intensified its political, diplomatic and military preparatory efforts, in close cooperation with the African Union, the United Nations and other partners aimed at satisfying the requirements of the Security Council for a mandate, as set out in paragraph 18 of the resolution.

In my letter of 1 August 2012, I informed you about progress made by ECOWAS in stabilizing the transition in Mali, including facilitating the return of the interim president, Dioncounda Traoré, to Mali on 27 July 2012 and the formation of a Government of National Unity, as well as the efforts to formulate and implement a road map that would lead to the reunification of the country and the restoration of full constitutional order through transparent, free, fair and credible elections by April 2013.

I also updated you on the outcome of the work of the ECOWAS technical assessment missions to Mali, with the active participation of military and political experts from the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, to fine-tune the concept, modalities and means of the planned deployment of the stabilization force.

As you may also be aware, the Government of Mali addressed formal requests to ECOWAS on 1 and 23 September 2012 for military assistance to end the crisis in the north of the country.

In the agreement reached with Mali and in line with ECOWAS policy, the strategy in Mali will be to continue to prioritize and intensify mediation efforts aimed at a peaceful resolution of the rebellion, while at the same time undertaking a three-phased deployment process with the following objectives:

Phase I: Setting up a coordination centre near Bamako to ensure the security of mission personnel as well as logistical, communications and other assets

Phase II: Helping the Government to restructure and reorganize the security and defence forces of Mali

Phase III: Helping the Government to restore the territorial integrity of Mali by extending State authority to the north, combating terrorist and criminal networks and responding to the humanitarian consequences of the crisis

The main purpose of the present letter is, therefore, to seek your cooperation in securing an urgent meeting of the Security Council to further consider the ECOWAS request for a resolution authorizing the deployment of a stabilization force in Mali under a Chapter VII mandate.

As soon as the mandate is granted, ECOWAS will be ready to deploy the first contingents of the stabilization force to undertake tasks under phases I and II of the deployment strategy, while fine-tuning the modalities and means for phase III in cooperation with the African Union, the United Nations and other partners.

I anticipate that the formal request for assistance addressed to ECOWAS by the Government of Mali clears a major hurdle in the efforts to secure the Security Council mandate. I am also persuaded to believe, from the deliberations at the high-level meeting on the Sahel, that the entire international community is unanimous in considering the crisis in the north of Mali a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and that, as such, it must not be allowed to fester any further. Mali today holds the key to tackling the myriad challenges facing the Sahel, and how the international community cooperates to resolve the double crisis will provide a template for the implementation of the laudable integrated strategy for the Sahel.

(*Signed*) Kadré Désiré **Ouédraogo**
President of the Commission